Electronic Health Records for Nursing Homes

Electronic Health Records

An electronic health record (EHR) is an electronic version of a patient's longitudinal medical history. The EHR may include all of the key administrative and clinical data relevant to that person's health care under a particular provider, including demographics, progress notes, problems, medications, vital signs, past medical history, immunizations, laboratory data, and radiology reports. EHRs are the essential next step in the continued progress of achieving a statewide health information exchange (HIE) and have the potential to improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of patient care delivery, while reducing overall health care costs.

Benefits of EHRs

The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology indicates the potential benefits of an EHR include:

- Improved efficiency of workflow
- Improved billing
- Reduced transcription costs
- Increased formulary compliance, leading to fewer pharmacy call backs
- Decreased duplicate testing
- Easier preventative care
- Point-of-care decision support
- Rapid and remote access to patient information
- Easier chronic disease management
- Integration of evidence-based clinical guidelines
- Provide best and latest treatment options for the resident's needs
- Streamline the reporting of public health information
- Protect the privacy of the resident
- Fewer repetitive, tedious tasks
- Less "chart chasing"
- Easier compliance with regulations
- Demonstrable high-quality care
- Customer Satisfaction Improvement
- Improved response from physician
- Improved continuity of care
- Improved delivery of resident education materials

Adoption - A Nursing Home Sample Case Study

The Situation

The facility implemented all modules of a long term care vendor EHR product that included financials and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid required Minimal Data Set (MDS) reporting. The nursing home was trained by the EHR vendor and then conducted their own training program on all aspects of the system.

The Benefits

The nursing home has experienced more staff time with residents by decreasing the charting time on paper. Information is more accessible, more accurate, easier to enter, and quicker to find. Nurses enter information real time, thereby allowing more information to be captured. Everyone on staff has their own "to-do list." This identifies any missed or incomplete information that can be captured before the end of shift. The EHR system improved survey documentation, resulting in higher survey scores within two years of implementing the EHR, improving quality of care and reimbursement.

2010 Environmental Scan

The MHCC conducted an environmental scan (scan) in July 2010 to assess the use of EHRs in Maryland nursing homes. The scan's key findings show:

Adoption

- EHR adoption among independent nursing homes in Maryland is roughly 30 percent (up from 26 percent in 2009)
- The majority of the respondents who have adopted EHRs are independent nursing homes versus multi-facility nursing homes (71 percent)
- Approximately 57 percent of those having an EHR are medium-sized facilities (100-199 beds)
- Over 56 percent of independent nursing homes who have adopted EHRs are in rural areas

2010 Environmental Scan (cont.)

Planning

- About 88 percent of those nursing homes who did not have an EHR plan to implement one in the near future
- Almost 48 percent of those planning to implement an EHR in the near future expect to do so in the next 12 months
- At the current rate of adoption, it will take four more years to get 50 percent of the independent nursing homes to adopt EHRs and an additional 12 years to have 100 percent of the independent nursing homes adopt EHRs

Functionality Used

- The most commonly used functions include Care Plans at 89 percent, Activities of Daily Living at 89 percent, and Assessments at 93 percent
- Computerized physician order entry and electronic medication administration are used by about 57 percent of the nursing homes
- Documentation activities are used by 82 percent of the nursing homes
- EHR functionality is used by 43 percent of the nursing homes

Interfaces

- Most of the nursing homes that have adopted an EHR are interfaced to the MDS (89 percent) while approximately 79 percent also interface to an accounting and billing system

MHCC Nursing Home EHR Product Portfolio

The MHCC has developed a nursing home product portfolio (Portfolio) to provide nursing homes with evaluation and comparison information on EHRs, and contains a core set of product information that will assist nursing homes in assessing EHRs. Approximately six vendors are included in the Portfolio, and they have provided the following information:

- Reference Verification
- Reference Report
- Product Pricing and Projections
- Privacy and Security Policies
- PowerPoint Presentations
- Case Studies
- Website Address
- Contact Information

The MHCC Nursing Home EHR Product Portfolio is located at:
http://mhcc.dhmh.maryland.gov/hit/ehr/Pages/nursing_home/nursinghomeehr.aspx

Participating Vendors: